



SC Department of Employment and Workforce

NEWS RELEASE

Media Contact:

Heather Bianca

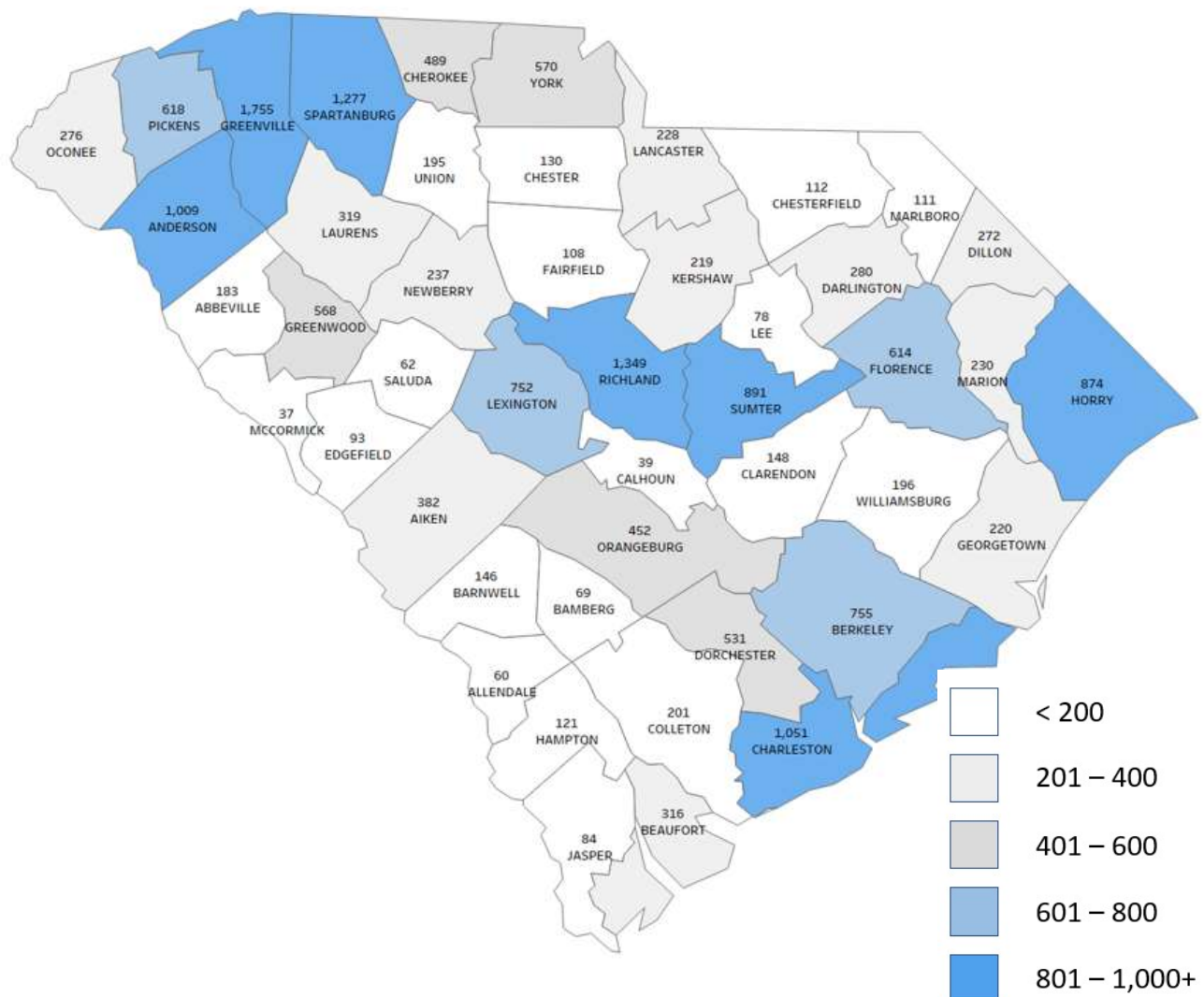
For Immediate Release

8:35 a.m. July 16, 2020

South Carolina Initial Unemployment Insurance Claims Data Week Ending July 11, 2020

Initial Claims: For claim week ending July 11, 2020, the number of South Carolinians who filed their initial claim for unemployment insurance benefits is 19,329, an **increase** of 3,267 initial claims from the week prior. This brings the initial claims total to 671,079 received since mid-March.

County Map (Intrastate)





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“When looking at this claim week, the jump in numbers may be surprising, but it does track with an annual trend our agency sees each year around the 4th of July holiday. The week following the 4th of July has historically recorded a higher number of initial claims as it represents layoffs and closings for the holiday week. When an individual files for unemployment insurance, they are filing for layoff or lack of work for the prior week. What we see is a trend, mainly due to businesses, often in the manufacturing sector, closing operations for a week or two around this summer holiday each year. Here’s a snapshot of this trend over a three-year period,” states executive director, Dan Ellzey.

“While this year’s initial claims total is significantly higher in volume, the percentage increase (20.3%) is significantly lower than 2018 (51%) and 2019 (79%). While an upward trend is not something we ever want to see, we do believe this trend is isolated and isn’t solely pinpointed to impacts from COVID-19,” concluded Ellzey.

Agency Responsiveness:

- From March 15, 2020 to July 14, 2020, the agency has paid more than \$3.15 Billion in a combination of South Carolina UI benefits, **Pandemic Unemployment Assistance** (for the self-employed and others), the **Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation** (\$600 per week) program, the **Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation** (extension of benefits for 13 weeks) program and **Extended Benefits** (Additional 10 weeks of benefits after PEUC).
- FPUC, which provides an additional \$600 per week to eligible claimants, is set to expire after Saturday, July 25, 2020. This expiration date was set in the CARES Act. Additional federal legislation would be needed to extend.

Call center hours (1-866-831-1724)

Monday-Friday 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Saturday 8 a.m. - NOON

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About the S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce

The S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce is putting South Carolinians to work. The agency has four missions: (1) workforce development; (2) free job match employment services; (3) unemployment insurance; and (4) labor market information. All four missions contribute to workforce development. The agency is dedicated to advancing South Carolina through services and programs that meet the needs of our businesses, jobseekers and those looking to advance their careers.

**An initial claim is a claim filed by an unemployed individual after a separation from an employer. The claimant requests a determination of basic eligibility for the UI program. When an initial claim is filed with a state, certain programmatic activities take place and these result in activity counts including the count of initial claims. The count of U.S. initial claims for unemployment insurance is a leading economic indicator because it is an indication of emerging labor market conditions in the country. However, these are weekly administrative data which are difficult to seasonally adjust, making the series subject to some volatility.*
